

March 21, 1961

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Dear Harry:

I was very pleased to get your NASA project annual report. It has a lot of thought-provoking material in it. Murray's remark on page 18, footnote, was especially relieving since I had not known whether I was justified in being puzzled myself.

The suggestion on page 20 and elsewhere of the desirability of looking for transient optical effect is an intriguing one - however, I wonder if you are not being too negative about the likelihood of finding them across the lunar terminator. What I had in mind are the possible production of color centers in surface minerals under bombardment by solar X-radiation and their subsequent removal at higher temperatures. For these investigations it might be desirable to look over a wide range of narrow wavelength bands.

While I have the occasion, may I ask you whether there has been a decent study of the UV reflection spectrum of the moon, both from the standpoint of terrestrial surface observations between 310 and 400 nm and with respect to the planning of further studies at lower wavelengths from high altitudes.

The situation concerning silicates on Mars lends further weight to the urgency of looking at the Earth from the same standpoint. As far as I know no one has yet demonstrated the presence of terrestrial silicates by analogous methods.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

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